“Explain how the novel Coraline is typical of the gothic form giving examples from the book to support your discussion.”

The common gothic story Coraline by Neil Gaiman is about Coraline going on an adventure to an alternate world where a supernatural being kidnaps her parents, three children and herself. It is about Coraline’s adventure and how she sets them free. The common gothic features in the novel, such as the setting, nightmarish or unexpected events and the omens show that ‘Coraline’ sis typical of the gothic genre.

The setting in the novel is typical and common of settings found in most gothic narrations. In the novel Coraline, the setting creates emotions for the reader such as fear, excitement and mystery. The old abandoned house creates mystery, the fog which minimizes visibility creates a feeling of anxiousness, the overgrown garden and the other world are all settings in Coraline that are created by the author to make the reader feel scared as if they were present in the setting with the protagonist. The setting creates some of the feelings for the reader to experience, but a great gothic story also needs its unexpected or nightmarish events to complete the emotions.

Coralline has a series of nightmarish and unexpected events running through it. These events create problems for the antagonist which need to be solved and emotions like sadness, shock and fear. In Coraline some unexpected events are her parents going missing, the animals being able to talk in the other world, meeting the lost souls of children, going through the brick wall and finding her other father as a clay monster. Events like the other father attacking her may cause the reader to feel suspense. As well as the setting and unexpected or nightmarish events, Coraline also has its good and bad omens.

Every gothic story has omens that symbolize good or evil. Omens can be symbols of good or bad, good luck or bad luck. The old black key, the other mothers hand and the black cat at the beginning of the story are all bad omens because the black key represented the tunnel to the other world and the other mothers hand represented the evilness in her. The stone with the hole in it and the cat at the end of the story aren’t bad but good omens because the cat helped Coraline escape the other world and the stone helped her find the ghostly souls. The omens in a gothic story are only some of the features needed to make gothic stories.

The setting, omens and nightmarish and unexpected events are all common gothic features used in most gothic novels. These are used to make the reader feel emotions like suspense, sympathy, terror, sadness and happiness. Coraline is a typical gothic narrative that has all these features, to make it a great gothic story.

By Lauren Sparkes 8F